



News Release

Arizona Department of Public Safety

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Gang Intelligence and Team Enforcement Mission (GITEM) Update

The Gang Intelligence and Team Enforcement Mission (GITEM) has made a serious comeback within the Arizona Department of Public Safety. With support from Governor Napolitano, the Arizona State Legislature tasked DPS with reviving the former prowess of GITEM by budgeting an additional \$3.9 million to combat rising gang problems in the state.

During the past week, GITEM effectively completed two successful operations. On Nov. 10th, detectives from the Maricopa County GITEM unit answered the call from the Phoenix Police Department to investigate a gang member selling crack in the Duppa Villa housing project at 20th Street and Van Buren. Undercover detectives were able to purchase rock cocaine from the suspect and ultimately arrest him. GITEM detectives then served a search warrant at the sales location and seized half an ounce of crack cocaine along with a loaded handgun and \$700 cash.

On Nov. 11th and 12th, the Maricopa County GITEM squad assisted San Carlos Apache Police Department with a gang enforcement detail during the 39th annual Veteran's Day rodeo events at the Apache Gold Casino. During that two day detail, GITEM detectives arrested 30 gang members, six of whom were arrested for aggravated assault. Another 50 gang members were identified during the short weekend event and GITEM established over 300 community contacts.

The GITEM team is a task force of personnel from across the state, directed and administered by the Arizona Department of Public Safety. GITEM is now present in Apache, Cochise, Coconino, Mohave, Maricopa, Pima and Pinal counties. Their mission is to deter criminal gang activities and dismantle criminal gang organizations and their illegal enterprises. GITEM will accomplish their mission through the collection and sharing of gang information with other law enforcement agencies, training criminal justice personnel regarding the identification and interdiction of gangs, and educating the public through community awareness programs and presentation.